

FACTORS INFLUENCING CAREER CHOICES OF NATIVE AMERICAN
AND CAUCASIAN AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS:
A REPLICATION STUDY

By

Christine Marie Doud

A Research Paper

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the

Master of Science Degree

With a Major in

Guidance and Counseling

Approved: Two Semester Credits

Investigation Advisor

The Graduate College
University of Wisconsin-Stout
July 2003

The Graduate College
University of Wisconsin-Stout
Menomonie, Wisconsin 54751

ABSTRACT

Doud, Christine M.

Factors Influencing Career Choices of Native American and Caucasian American Junior and Senior Students: A Replication Study

Guidance and Counseling (K – 12)
Jill Stanton, Research Advisor

July 2003

Senior high school level students are at a critical career decision stage. Indian educators historically postulate Native American students have difficulty in their secondary educational experiences. Native and Caucasian students need direction, education and encouragement for post-secondary plans to occur. With high dropout rates still a major problem for Native American students, research on career choices seems critical.

Stout student Cynthia Scharr Newcomb completed an original study in 1992 in Bayfield and Ashland High schools. This replication study was conducted to determine relative factors influencing career and occupational decision making. Factors to be identified involved relatives, peers, school faculty, community members and immediate family members. A three-page modified survey was given to similar junior and senior level subjects. The survey results were analyzed to examine major influences in career paths for junior and senior students at the Hayward and Lakeland High Schools. These two groups of selected subjects are located within northern Wisconsin. The research compared two Northern Wisconsin ethnic groups, Caucasian and native Americans, to identify factors that can assist educational personnel in improving post-secondary opportunities for high school youth of both ethnic backgrounds.

A Stout statistician calculated descriptive statistics from the student's self-identified ethnicity. Comparison scores were conducted to determine factors of importance to each ethnic group career choice. Non reservation and reservation students' choices were also examined.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. Dennis VanDenHeuvel, Dr. Amy Gillett, Jill Stanton and Kathy Baerg for their time, support, kindness and advice while I prepared this research paper.

I would also like to extend my appreciation to my children, Misty, Christy, Jesse and John Jackson for their patience and their continual expectation that this research paper would be completed.

I appreciate and extend a kind thank you to special friend, Martin Soulier for his gentle persuasion to stop procrastinating.

Most meaningful, I give credit to the tireless efforts and the work of Wisconsin Home School Coordinators with the Native American students and their families. In large part and because of the Home School Coordinators' dedication, we proudly attend high school graduation each spring. We are provided an opportunity to cheer mightily for the high school graduates.

My gratitude, admiration and respect are extended to the past, present and future Native American high school student.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page.....	i
Abstract.....	ii
Chapter I INTRODUCTION.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	3
Definition of Terms.....	4
Chapter II REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	6
Chapter III METHODOLOGY.....	14
Introduction.....	14
Subject Description and Selection.....	14
Instrumentation.....	15
Data Collection.....	16
Data Analysis.....	16
Limitations.....	17
Chapter IV RESULTS.....	18
Introduction.....	18
Demographic Information.....	18
Research Questions.....	19
Table I Factors That Affect Career Choices.....	20
Chapter V SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS.....	27
References.....	28
Appendix A Voluntary Participation/Consent Information.....	30
Appendix B Career Influence Questionnaire.....	31

Chapter I

Introduction

Each spring in Northern Wisconsin, hundreds of high school seniors and their families look forward to the culminating high school experience and subsequent graduation celebration. Freshman, sophomore and junior high school students look up with admiration and excitement to the graduating seniors. The senior year has, for the most part, been busily filled preparing for post high school plans. Parents, relatives, teachers, and community members congratulate the students and in the same breath, ask, “What are your plans following graduation?” Many of the Caucasian students have made concise plans, as their responses often reflect, “I’m going to attend a two year college and then will transfer to a four year college, I have a job and will work at...My father was in the Army and so I have enlisted and leave for basics,” or many proudly indicate acceptance at a four year university or college.

Less concise is the graduating Native American senior who may indicate, “Not sure yet what I plan to do,” or maybe a part-time job awaits, with the possibility of obtaining full time work. Native students’ expressions of, “I’m going to take a break,” are too often viewed negatively, as not having begun solid plans in preparation of starting their young adult lives. The array of individual high school students’ experiences relating to career information, career exploration and vocational planning have a significant influence on positive development of young lives and their futures.

During the late 1980’s, the Native people of Northern Wisconsin were involved with interracial tensions, as the right to exercise hunting, fishing, and gathering that was provided through the treaties, was upheld by the state and federal judicial systems. Many

high school age students were present at the boat landings during that time and to this day continue to exercise their treaty rights. Their white classmates may have been supportive or standing at opposing shores. Interracial tensions have somewhat diminished due to the 1989 enactment of Wisconsin state statute ACT 31, which indicated that all public school students must be educated in diversity issues, more specifically, issues related to Wisconsin tribes including treaties and sovereignty (retrieved July 2, 2003 from <http://www.dpi.state.us/dpi/dlseal/equity/pdf/aisfs.pdf>). However the remnants of the racism experienced then continue to impact Native American students. Learning about and understanding multicultural issues is critical in helping students comprehend what students of different ethnicity's lives are like within their own home communities. Native students also benefit from culturally sensitive curriculum.

Dropout rates among Native students remain considerably higher as compared to Caucasian peers. Despite the passage of the 1972 Indian Education Act and close federal monitoring of Indian educational services, this dropout statistic has not decreased.

“The 1980 census, the last from which comprehensive data has been extrapolated, reveals that nearly fifty years after the passage of the Johnson O’ Malley (JOM) and Indian Reorganization Act (IRA), barely 83% of Native Americans complete a grade school education, and only 56 % complete high school. About 16 % graduate from a four-year college, and about 3 % hold a graduate degree of some sort” (James, 1992). Later reports show little improvement.

The purpose of this study is to learn if factors contributing to career choices today are similar to the Newcomb study conducted in 1991. Hopefully, the replication of the Newcomb study will be utilized by parents, home school coordinators, guidance

counselors, and college recruitment staff who will work closely with Native American and Caucasian students.

The information surveyed can be used for recruitment and to further increase awareness as to what specifically influences students of both ethnic backgrounds in career selection. Community and tribal program personnel who desire an increased understanding of better relations between students will find the data useful.

Research questions to be addressed include:

Are similar factors eight years later continuing to influence career choices of tribally enrolled members of reservations and are these different from factors influencing career plans of Caucasian students attending the same schools?

Do Native American Home School Coordinators or tribal leaders have more influence on Native American students' career choices than do white guidance counselors?

Do factors influencing career choices of Native Americans living on the reservation differ from those influencing Native American students living in towns adjacent to reservations?

Does the emergence of the latest technology of the World Wide Web computer information have an influence on career choices of Native American and Caucasian adolescents?

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to document the career influences and aspirations of Native American and Caucasian students at two northern Wisconsin high schools adjacent to tribal reservations during their Junior and Senior year of high school. Data

was gathered using a survey adapted from Newcomb's (1992) instrument (Appendix A, Consent form and Appendix B, Survey). The survey was distributed and collected at two high schools in Wisconsin with both Native and Caucasian students, with the assistance of high school faculty.

Definition of Terms

Career Choice was defined as the act of selecting a vocation or career.

Caucasians, Whites, or Anglos were defined as people of Northern European decent. The terms are used synonymously in this study.

Factors are any circumstance, person, condition, or influence that bring about a certain effect.

Home School Coordinator was defined as the paraprofessional Native American student support person hired jointly by the tribe and educational district to act as a liaison between Native American students' homes, schools, and communities.

Native American or American Indians were defined as any aboriginal peoples of North America, South America, Alaska or West Indies. The words Native and Indian will be used interchangeable in this research project. The majority of self-identified Indians in this study were to indicate which tribe they were specifically enrolled in. The Ojibwe were identified as enrolled members of North American Indian Tribes living in the northern location of Wisconsin. All Native American students involved with this survey identified themselves as having Ojibwe ancestry.

Reservation was defined as an area with boundaries established by treaties. The general allotment act, otherwise known as the Dawes Allotment Act of 1887 provided parcels of land to individual Indians on reservations.

Limitations

The questionnaire did not provide student opportunity to specify in what order they determined influential factors. The survey items provided did not include culturally relevant native vocabulary, i.e. extended family, cousins, speakers heard at pow wows, and tribal elders. The number of participatory Native American students was much less than the Caucasian students' participation. All students were enrolled in public schools in the Hayward and Minocqua, Wisconsin areas.

As in Newcombs' original study, the administration faculty, principals and guidance counselors were Caucasian and the home school coordinators were Native American, both tribally enrolled members of their respective reservations of Lac Courte Oreilles, near Hayward, and Lac du Flambeau, near Minocqua.

Chapter II

Review of Literature

This chapter will discuss the current literature regarding Native American and Caucasian students' post secondary career plans, followed by positive influences of significant programs. In addition, understanding the realities of career decisions and what actions are entailed and general success while enrolled in school will be discussed.

According to Thompson, cited in Byrde, (1966), sixty percent of Indian high school students do not stay in school until graduation. Comparatively speaking, the Indian high school dropout problem at the time (1958-59) of that research was about fifty percent greater than the national dropout rate. In 1959, both of this researcher's parents were in their early twenties, neither of which had attended high school. Current information continues to indicate that the Native American student graduation rate from educational institutions remains much lower than that of the Caucasian student. The U.S. Department of Education (2001) indicated that in the state of Wisconsin, during the 1998-99 school year, there were 538 American Indian/Alaskan Native students who graduated from high school. There were 52,415 Caucasian students who graduated from high school. Also during 1998-1999 there were 4.6% of Wisconsin Native students who dropped out of high school as compared to 1.6 % of White, non-Hispanic who dropped out during the school year 1998-99 (p. 128).

While the above mentioned percentage may seem quite low, dropout statistics for Wisconsin students do not include those students who attain age 18, the age when compulsory attendance ends during the last semester of their senior year. If they leave school, they are viewed as voluntarily withdrawing from school. Additionally, students

who are 1.00 – 2.00 credits deficient of those required for high school graduation, often enroll in a summer school plan. The high school end of the year report to the Wisconsin Department of Instruction does not indicate these students as dropouts. Often the senior does not accomplish the summer school credit accumulation and does not attain graduation status.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) the federal overseer of Native education programs has had mixed success with school since its' inception in 1921. According to a 2002 publication entitled, *Building Exemplary Schools for Tomorrow*, “ ...Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 introduced the teaching of Indian history and culture into BIA schools. Full assimilation and eradication of Indian culture had been the policy of the Federal government previously (p. 2).

According to many reports, the attempt at assimilation of Indian students did not disappear as a result of the Reorganization Act. However, most recently the Bureau of Indian Affairs has attempted to create positive education goals for Native students. The Office of Indian Education Programs Director, William A. Mehojah, Jr. in January 2001, after “the meeting of 100” reported the following five goals to guide BIA efforts for the next five years:

- All children will read independently by the third grade
- 70% of students will be proficient/advanced in reading and math
- Individual student attendance rate will be 90% or better
- Students will demonstrate knowledge of their language and culture to improve academic achievement

- Increased enrollment, retention, placement and graduation rates for post secondary students (<http://www.iiep.bia.edu> p. 1)

Efforts will be directed to all school faculty, who will be provided ample professional development time to build the skills necessary for helping the Native student attain success in their educational endeavors. These efforts will be directed to the 185 elementary and secondary schools, 26 colleges, located in 23 states on 63 reservations, which have Native student populations of approximately, 70,000 representing 238 tribes. (<http://www.iiep.bia.edu> p. 3)

Many Indian education programs have been designed and implemented to assure success of Native American students in all varieties of educational institutions. The Johnson O'Malley (JOM) program, funded and instituted in the 1970's, continues to provide federal funds for in school, direct student services. An example of a JOM funded service is the recognition and continuation of high school home school coordinators, that are also Native, being placed in school districts with high Native student enrollment. Additional positive programs include the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction pre-college programs (Burmester, 2002) for minority students, which began in the early 1990's, along with the Wisconsin Educational Opportunities Program, American Indian Science and Engineering Society and the programs and Native university personnel who work with students for recruitment and retention purposes.

Wright (1986) and many other researchers indicate that Native groups are consistently among the least successful of any racial or ethnic group in America. A 1991 Indian Nations at Risk Study indicated that dropout rates for Native American students were just below 50% (cited in Cleary and Peacock, 1998 p. 83). Many reports suggest

even higher rates. Cleary and Peacock (1998) also suggest that along with our nation's highest dropout group with the lowest attendance rates, lower levels of school achievement also exist.

At Hayward High School, in northern Wisconsin during the 1998-99 academic year, the student body was made up of 19.2% Native American students, and 79.7% white. The American Indian/Alaska Native population of Hayward High consisted of 114 students, 39 of whom were considered habitually truant, or 34.211%. At the Lakeland High school this same year, there were 906 students of all races, 68 Native, of whom were habitually truant for a 7.506% truancy rate (retrieved on July 2, 2003 from <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/sig/index.html>). Irregular attendance appears to be supported by these statistics.

In spite of this dismal data Wisconsin's Department of Public Instruction along with the state legislature has begun mandating the education of all Wisconsin teachers and students via training and technical assistance to reflect:

1989 Wisconsin Act 31 established a program within the Department of Public Instruction which is charged with aiding school districts in their development of appropriate resources and instruction. Related issues of performance of Indian students in the public school also come within the purview of this program. Recent national studies (i.e. the 1991 Indian Nations at Risk and the 1992 White House Conference on Indian Education) point to significant deficiencies and trends in the education of American Indian Students, many of which are mirrored here in Wisconsin. Through involvement with home-school coordinators, state, tribal, and

regional level associations and boards, the American Indian Studies Program staff provides information, training, and technical assistance to local school districts (retrieved on July 2, 2003 from <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dlseal/equity/pdf/aisfs.pdf>).

The U.S. Department of Education's Indian Nations at Risk Task Force (1982) postulated that all contacts a Native child develops needs to be within a trusting relationship, large schools need restructuring so teachers and students develop a caring rapport and educate "holistically" the entire child, in order to prevent and reduce Native student dropout statistics. Additionally, the local educational agencies need to inform school staff on what works in Native education, i.e. smaller schools, students being involved in decision making and the need for more Native teachers to provide role modeling and culturally sensitive knowledge to ensure retention of Native students through graduation.

Of equal importance, Lieberman, (1986), indicates, "there is probably little the schools per se can do to alter the socioeconomic system, reduce unemployment....there remains a great deal teachers can do to empower the young to reflect critically on what happens to them and around them, to identify what is possible for them and move to make it real. It may even be that those of us who can awaken the young to go beyond in their sense-making and their risk-taking may make some contribution to the transformation of their worlds." (P. 22).

A joint collaboration effort of the Department of Public Instruction, University of Wisconsin System, and the University of Wisconsin-Extension published a pre-college program directory describing opportunities for Wisconsin youth. Programs are inclusive

of many academic and nonacademic areas, which can extensively involve middle and secondary minority students' access, education, and information to understand the high school-to-college transition. Parents, students and local education districts are involved with assisting students' participation in these pre-college events. The 2002 biannual publication provided information of 400 plus pre-college opportunities from many areas of extra-curricular activities, music, art, study skills, science, and math. This collaborative effort provided information that otherwise would not be easily accessible to students of color (DPI-pre college program directory, 2002).

Another positive outcome was experienced through a community service program designed and implemented for dropout-prevention utilizing at risk students. Volunteer students were educated about the benefits their assistance would be, to students with disabilities. Delaney and Corbett (1994) cited:

The results from the first year's evaluation support the project's objectives, which were to improve students' academic self concept and enable them to experience the genuine sense of satisfaction that comes from helping others...a community service component in a drop-out prevention program may well be a way for schools to help at-risk students find reasons to stay in school and improve their academic performance.

(p. 14)

While this isn't specific to Native American students, it is certainly something worth considering.

A well-known Native author, Vine Deloria Jr., stated his concerns about the education of Native students:

The push for education in the last generation has done more to erode the sense of Indian identity than any integration program the government previously attempted. The irony of the situation is that Indians truly believed that by seeking a better life for their children through education, much could be accomplished, College and graduate education, however, have now created a generation of technicians who also happen to have Indian blood. People want the good life and they are prepared to throw away their past in order to get it. (p. 2)

The non-Native traditional educational arena is often times conflicting to Natives who have been raised on the reservations. Rick St. Germaine, an Ojibwe tribal member and educator in Wisconsin, (1996) has written that recent attention has focused on cultural discontinuity. The high incidence of Native student dropout is noted in the following excerpt:

If the resulting clash of cultures continues, the minority child may feel forced to choose one culture at the expense of the other. A tragic paradox emerges: Success (in school) becomes failure (in the community), and failure becomes success... Moreover: it has been argued that failure is not simply the passive act of neglecting to complete tasks, but that it may be a status that is actively pursued by ethnic minority students in order to preserve their culture of origin.”

The Native student often experiences values conflict in the process of attaining their education. Educators need to be aware that the “fit” for a Native American child in school is multi-faced. No single-issue stands out when it comes to academic success but, rather, many themes seem to emerge from the literature, all of which must be taken into consideration.

Chapter III

Methodology

Introduction

Because the original study done by Newcomb provided a study of Native and Caucasian student junior and senior populations in Northern Wisconsin, the sampling this researcher selected was similar, with the exception that two different school districts with high Native American student representation were selected. The three page instrument utilized was similar, with the only difference being the addition of the number 33 item, relative to information gathered from the World Wide Web. In addition, the data collected was analyzed by a University of Wisconsin-Stout statistician to complete data analysis. In conclusion, the limitations of this study will be provided.

Subject Description and Selection

Both the Hayward and Lakeland High School principals and home school coordinators were contacted by phone to schedule an appointment to discuss and explain this researcher's intention. An on site visit was conducted to clarify questions and determine how best the questionnaire would most effectively be presented. The building principals notified the students' parents of the upcoming survey by sending home a half sheet of information explaining the survey. This sheet notified all parents in writing that if they did not wish their student to participate, they should contact the building principal by a specific date.

It was anticipated that a high number of students would participate, as they had the opportunity to leave class to go to the auditorium to complete the survey. The announcement of this researcher's arrival was included in the daily bulletin distributed to

all homeroom classes. At the agreed upon study hall time, the students were called by the public announcement (PA) system to report to the auditorium. Students were separated, with seniors being called first. When the seniors had completed the questionnaire, they were dismissed back to class. The junior class was then called by public announcement system to report to the auditorium. As compulsory attendance is required on a daily basis, it was anticipated the sampling would be all inclusive of the junior and senior students of both high schools in attendance that day.

The two schools selected to be involved were chosen because Indian reservations were within a 12-mile distance of the public schools. In addition, both schools had been involved in the Department of Public Instruction's Pre-college Program opportunity, so some students had had an opportunity to visit a university setting. Newcomb's original study indicated that both of the selected schools had significant representation of both Caucasian and Native American student populations. Hayward and Minocqua are representative of both as well.

Instrumentation

The questionnaire consisted of the original 32 items, plus the addition of the World Wide Web (www) item. The items were rated on a five point Likert scale, from not very influential to not applicable. There were five ethnographic background questions. The ethnographic questions were included so that comparisons could be made between responses of Caucasians, Natives residing on the reservation, and Natives residing off the reservation, and between students of both schools. Having already had the instrument distributed, collected and analyzed by the previous researcher, Newcomb,

this researcher did not feel it necessary to have it processed for face validity. Newcomb indicated the questionnaire had been pilot tested on ten graduate students.

Data Collection

This replication study was conducted to determine if eight years after the Newcomb study, changes had occurred in factors influencing career choices of Native American youth, and if the responses differed from factors influencing Caucasian youth. Students surveyed were enrolled in two different northern Wisconsin public schools. The researcher compared these two ethnic groups to identify factors that could assist high school staff, university personnel, and other service agencies in improving career and vocational opportunities for youth of both races. The sample consisted of northern Wisconsin Native American students from the Lac du Flambeau and Lac Courte Oreilles Bands of Ojibwe. The Native students attended the same high schools that the white junior and senior high school students attended. All were surveyed at the Lakeland High School, Minocqua, WI and Hayward High School, Hayward, WI. The researcher administered the questionnaire directly and was available to provide answers to any questions students might have had. All school staff and students were advised that the researcher was a University of Wisconsin-Stout graduate student pursuing a Master's degree in guidance and counseling.

Data Analysis

Utilizing the University of Wisconsin Stout's computer system, as Newcomb had in her research paper, a statistician and research consultant calculated descriptive statistics to determine frequency counts, means, and standard deviations of the responses.

Limitations

A limitation of the instrument designed included the addition of the factor under “other” of Internet information (World Wide Web). As Newcomb’s original survey did not include this item, it had no measure of validity or reliability for comparative information. The sampling was not inclusive of 100% of student enrollment, due to absences of some students the day of the survey administration. One other limitation is that these are only two sample schools in a Midwestern state. The results cannot be generalized across school systems throughout the country.

CHAPTER IV

Results

Introduction

The results of this study will be presented in this chapter. First, the demographics of the sample will be presented. The chapter will conclude with the results of the research questions.

Demographic Information

There were 464 students from two high schools in northern Wisconsin who participated in this study. There were 745 students who were invited to participate in this study. With 464 responses, this constituted a return rate of 62.3%. The schools had a high concentration of Native American students and that is in part why these schools were selected. In school #1, 201 of the 305 students took part in the study (65.9% participated) and in school #2, 263 of 450 students participated (58.4%). Of the 464 students, 223 (275 possible respondents) indicated that they were juniors and 241 (380 possible respondents) indicated that they were seniors. There were 231 males in the study and 224 females. Nine students did not indicate their gender. Of the participants, 9.1% (n=42) indicated that they lived on the reservation, while 89.4% (n=415) stated both Indians and non-Indians did not live on the reservation. Seven students chose not to answer this question.

Of the 464 students participating in this study, 6.7% (n=31) were Native American, .6% (n=3) were of Asian decent, 1.1% (n=5) were African American, 1.1% (n=5) were Hispanic, and 87.3% (n=405) were White. There was one student who indicated “other” as his/her response, 7 students indicated multiple responses, and 7 students chose to not indicate their ethnic/racial background.

Of the 458 students who responded to whether they had made plans for after graduation, 396 indicated they had plans, whereas 62 were undecided as to their plans after graduation. Of the 396 who stated they had plans, 251 (63.4%) stated they were planning to attend a 4 year college or university, 62 (15.7%) indicated that they were planning to attend a 2 year vocational/technical college, 16 (4%) stated they were going into the military, and 15 (3.8%) stated they had a job. Six of the respondents or 1.5% indicated they were planning on attending a tribal college. Ten students chose the “other” category and 36 (9.1%) checked multiple categories. Sixty-eight students indicated they were undecided on their plans or didn’t respond to that item, therefore, they didn’t indicate specifically what their plans after graduation were.

Research Questions

Research Question #1 – Are factors eight years later continuing to influence career choices of tribally enrolled members of reservations different from factors influencing career plans of Caucasian members of adjacent towns? T-tests were conducted to address this question. There were 33 factors divided into three categories: persons, events, and factors that were identified as areas that could influence the career decisions of adolescents. Of the 33 factors, only 9 were found to be statistically significant.

Five of the person factors listed in section one of the survey were: tribal leaders, family friend, home school coordinator, principal, and relatives. Tribal leaders were found to be statistically significant at the .001 level ($t = 4.507$; $df = 34$). Native American students indicated a much higher influence than did the Caucasian students. Family friend was found to be statically significant at the .049 level ($t = 1.974$; $df = 405$). Native

American students indicated that a family friend was more influential in their career decision making than the Caucasian students. Home school coordinator was more influential to Native American students than Caucasian students ($t = 3.865$; $df = 162$) at the .001 level. The principal was more influential for Native American students and their career decisions than for Caucasian students ($t = 2.262$; $df = 396$) at the .024 level. Relatives had a statistically significant influence on the career decisions of Native Americans compared to Caucasian students ($t = 3.914$; $df = 422$) at the .001 level. Clearly, 9 of the 15 person factors were statistically significant for Native American students compared to Caucasian students in this sample.

Comparing the results from this study to that of Newcomb (1992), there were no changes evident. In the Newcomb study, home school coordinators, principals, and guidance counselors were found to be the persons most influential in the career decisions of students.

Of the eight potentially influential events listed in section two on the survey, only one was found to be statistically significant. Native American students indicated that a visit from a military recruiter was more influential to them than to Caucasian students ($t = 2.186$; $df = 289$) at the .03 level. No other event factors were statistically different between Native American students and Caucasian students.

Newcomb's study (1992) found that a visit from a four-year college recruiter was influential for the career decisions of students in her sample. This study did not find that a visit from a 4 year college recruiter was influential for either Native American or Caucasian students. There has been a noticeable change in the way colleges and universities are recruiting. They are sending Native American recruiters to schools with

high percentages of Native American students. Noting this change, it is somewhat puzzling that this study did not find evidence of these efforts making a difference.

Of the ten influential factors listed in section three of the survey, three were statistically significant: location of job or college away from family, mailed recruitment materials, and Internet information. Location of a job or college away from family was more influential for Native Americans than for Caucasian students in their career decisions ($t = 2.059$; $df = 404$) at the .04 level. Recruitment materials mailed to students were found to be more influential to Native American students than to Caucasian students ($t = 2.231$; $df = 378$) at the .026 level. Internet information was more influential on Native American students' career decisions than for Caucasian students ($t = 2.11$; $df = 394$) at the .035 level.

The Newcomb study (1992) found no general factors that were statistically significant on the decisions of students. This study found clear evidence of three factors. Research Question #2 – Do Native American home school coordinators or tribal leaders have more influence on Native American students' career choices than do white guidance counselors? Means were calculated on items 2, 4, and 13. Tribal leaders had a mean of 2.43, guidance counselors had a mean of 2.41, and home school coordinators had a mean of 2.63.

In Newcomb's study (1992), she found that the means for home school coordinators and guidance counselors were about equal and higher than tribal leaders on their influence of career choices of Native American students. There is a clear shift away from guidance counselors' influence and an increase in the influence of tribal leaders.

Research Question #3 – Do factors influencing career choices of Native Americans living on the reservation differ from those influencing Native American students living in towns adjacent to reservations? Means and standard deviations were calculated to address this question. Items 1 through 33 were divided into three sections (persons, events, and factors) by whether the Native American students lived on the reservation or lived in the neighboring communities.

Table I – Factors That Affect Career Choices

Factors - Persons		Lives on Reservation	Does Not Live on Reservation
Sister or brother	Mean	2.53	3.00
	N	19	6
	SD	1.12	1.10
Tribal leader	Mean	2.68	1.50
	N	22	6
	SD	1.13	.84
Family Friend	Mean	2.68	3.13
	N	22	8
	SD	.99	.64
Guidance Counselor	Mean	2.55	2.00
	N	20	7
	SD	1.15	.82
JTPA Coordinator	Mean	2.47	1.75
	N	17	4
	SD	1.23	1.50
Girl or Boyfriend	Mean	2.60	3.12
	N	20	8
	SD	1.10	1.13
Adult Professional	Mean	2.26	2.00
	N	19	8
	SD	.93	.93
Minister/Clergy	Mean	2.00	1.60
	N	15	5
	SD	.93	.89
Father	Mean	3.05	3.67
	N	19	6
	SD	1.08	.82
Classmates	Mean	2.41	3.00
	N	22	7
	SD	1.05	.82
Mother	Mean	3.39	3.50
	N	23	8
	SD	.89	.76

Factors - Persons		Lives on Reservation	Does Not Live on Reservation
Teacher	Mean	2.71	2.62
	N	21	8
	SD	.96	.92
Home School Coordinator	Mean	2.92	1.75
	N	12	4
	SD	.90	.96
Principal	Mean	2.30	1.43
	N	20	7
	SD	1.08	.79
Relatives	Mean	3.30	3.25
	N	23	8
	SD	.97	.71
Factors - Events			
High school fair	Mean	2.17	2.00
	N	18	6
	SD	.86	1.26
Visit from 2 year voc/tech	Mean	2.00	1.00
	N	18	4
	SD	.91	.00
Visit from 4 year college	Mean	2.74	2.25
	N	19	4
	SD	1.11	1.50
Visit from military	Mean	2.32	1.80
	N	19	5
	SD	1.11	1.30
Assignment to work JTPA	Mean	2.47	1.00
	N	17	3
	SD	1.12	.00
Trip to 4 year college	Mean	2.78	2.83
	N	18	6
	SD	1.00	1.33
Trip to 2 year voc/tech	Mean	2.24	1.67
	N	17	3
	SD	1.15	1.15
Factory tour or job sight	Mean	2.43	1.50
	N	14	4
	SD	1.02	.58
Factors -General			
Job near family	Mean	2.36	2.25
	N	22	8
	SD	1.00	1.39
Job away from family	Mean	2.76	2.88
	N	21	8
	SD	1.09	1.36
TV show	Mean	1.72	1.50
	N	18	6
	SD	.89	1.22
Newspaper advertisement	Mean	2.11	1.50
	N	18	6
	SD	1.08	1.22

Factors General		Lives on Reservation	Does Not Live on Reservation
Magazine article	Mean	2.11	1.20
	N	18	5
	SD	1.08	.45
Radio advertisement	Mean	1.69	1.00
	N	16	6
	SD	.79	.00
Mailed recruitment	Mean	2.22	2.88
	N	18	8
	SD	1.06	1.25
High salary potential	Mean	2.91	3.00
	N	22	8
	SD	.97	.93
Challenging career	Mean	2.61	2.71
	N	18	7
	SD	.85	1.11
WWW and internet	Mean	2.40	2.75
	N	20	8
	SD	.99	1.28

It would appear that extended family: mother and father, sister and brother, and other relatives have significant influence on career choices of Native American adolescents, both living on and off the reservation. Native American students seem to value extended family and their contributions and information regarding career choice.

The Native American students residing on the reservation (mean = 2.92), as compared to Native American students living off the reservation (mean = 1.75), indicated that home school coordinators have more influence on the career decisions they make. The majority of the home school coordinators live on the reservation and participate in the tribal community activities more frequently, and therefore could have more influence on Native American students living on the reservation as compared to those living in neighboring communities.

Research Question #4 – Does the emergence of the latest technology of the World Wide Web computer information have an influence on career choices of Native American and Caucasian adolescents? Item number 33 addressed this question. One hundred and

fifty-two students (36.6%) indicated that computer information was influential or very influential in their career decision, while 100 students (24.1%) stated it was somewhat influential, and 163 students (39.3%) indicated that computer information was not very influential in their making a career decision. Since this item was added to the survey, there is no information that can be used to compare the results from this study to that of Newcomb (1992).

Chapter V

Conclusions and Recommendations

Summary

This paper has addressed factors that contribute to Caucasian and Native American student's career selection. Using a limited review of the literature the researcher was able to discern three areas of concern. In addition other factors included what programs are effective for assisting educators in quality delivery of services to the high school age student to maximize best career information to students.

There have been innumerable studies indicating the educational plight of the Native American student and the appalling lack of many Natives pursuing selected career aspirations. In contrast many non-Native students have done increasingly well in the current educational systems, having made precise plans to pursue a career, vocation or post-secondary education. This disparity has led Native educators, in recent years, to develop programs such as the Department of Public Instructions Pre-College program. These kinds of programs seem to have a much more positive effect on Native students' success within the various school systems. Native educators, who have a strong personal commitment for ensuring that the upcoming student will excel, staff many current programs. Support, advice, information, and education are amply bestowed on the student who has aspirations to learn of a career or vocation that is of great personal interest.

It is this researcher's recommendation that students as young as lower elementary be taught about cultural diversity. Further, all educational faculty should become knowledgeable about positive Native American educational practices. Much support and

adequate time for staff, parents and administrative supervisors need be allowed for excellent educational pursuits on behalf of Native American and non-Native students.

As Newcomb's findings indicated, factors that were influential for Native American students living on the reservation continue to be the home school coordinators, teachers, guidance counselors and extended family members. It would appear valuable for schools that funding should continue to maintain home school coordinator staff in the schools with high Native American student populations. Additionally, parents should be informed of services that maximize student achievement and success. According to Comer (1988), parents want to know (1) what is going on in school and how their children are doing, (2) how the system works and how they can be part of it, and (3) what they can do with their children at home to help them achieve. All students should be encouraged to participate in enrichment programs such as the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction pre-college programs. With efforts being made from many different sources, educational successes for Native American students may be more achievable for higher percentages of students.

Culturally sensitive educators who present an acceptance and understanding of the Native student are necessary to the student accessing and participating in positive enrichment programs. The involved student will likely have a more focused direction following high school graduation. It appears important that tribal individuals maintain involvement with students, as the three persons factors in this study indicated statistical significant factors being the influence of tribal leaders, extended family relatives, and home school coordinators.

REFERENCES

- Byrde, J. F., S.J., Ph.D. (1966) *The Sioux Indian student: A study of scholastic failure and personality conflict*. National Institute of Mental Health, Pine Ridge, S. D.
- Bureau of Indian Affairs (1991). American Indians today, answers to your questions. Third Edition. *United States Department of the Interior, Washington, D. C.*
- Burmester, E., Lyall, K., & Reilly, K. (2002). *Precollege program directory, opportunities for Wisconsin youth*. Joint publication sponsored by Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, University of Wisconsin-Extension, and University of Wisconsin System.
- Cleary, Linda Miller and Peacock, Thomas D. (1998) *Collected wisdom*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon
- Coleman, H., Manyfingers, B., & Unrau, Y.A. (2001). Revamping family preservation services for Native American families. *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, 10 (1), 49-68.
- Comer, J.P. (1988). *Connecting families and schools: In drawing in the family*, edited S.F. Walker. Denver, Colorado: Education Commission of the States.
- Delaney, B. & Corbett, W. (1994). *Students Serving Students: A Dropout-Prevention Program* (p. 14) The Clearing House, September/October
- Deloria, Jr., Vine (1997). *Red Earth, White Lies, Native Americans and the Myth of Scientific Fact*. Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing

Jaimes, M. A. (1992). *State of Native America: Genocide, colonization, and resistance*.

South End Press, Boston, MA.

Lieberman, A. (1986). *Rethinking school improvement, research, craft, and concept*.

New York: Teachers College Press

Mehojah, W. A. Jr. (2001) Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of Indian Education

Programs Booklet. Retrieved July 18, 2003 <http://www.iiep.bia.edu>

Newcomb, C. S. (1992). *A Survey of factors influencing career choices of Native*

American and Caucasian high school students. Unpublished Master's Thesis,

University of Wisconsin-Stout, Menomonie.

St. Germaine, R. (1996). *Drop-out rates among American Indian and Alaska Native*

students: Beyond cultural discontinuity. ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education

and Small Schools, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S.

Department of Education

United States Department of Education, (November 2001). National center for

educational statistics. Common core of data survey: and unpublished data. Table

105. Retrieved from

<http://www.nces.ed.gov/pubs2002/digest2001/tables/dt105.asp>

Wisconsin Information Network for Successful Schools. (2003). Retrieved July 2, 2003

from <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/sig/index.html>

Wright, S. C., (1986). 4-year nation wide survey. *University of California, Santa Cruz*.

California state Department of Education

<http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/sig/index.html> Date: 7/2/03

Appendix A

Voluntary participation/consent Information

The Hayward and Lakeland High Schools is seeking to better understand student career/occupation planning. All Junior and Senior students are invited to respond to a survey questionnaire about career influences.

I understand that my student's participation in this study is strictly voluntary and may be discontinued at any time without prejudice.

The questionnaire is anonymous and being give with permission of the high school principals. If you have any objections to your son's/daughter's participation please inform the high school principal by May 27, 1999.

Thank you,

Christine Doud, Student
UW-Stout

Appendix B

Career Influence Questionnaire

Please do not write your name on the questionnaire. Your participation is strictly voluntary and may be discontinued at any time.

As you read through the questionnaire, please answer the questions as truthfully and thoughtfully as possible.

Part I. The following is a listing of **persons** who may have influence on helping you decide what to do with your life after high school. On a scale of one to four, rate each person's importance in helping you choose a job, military career or continuing education by circling him or her as:

1 = NVI = Not Very Influential
 2 = SI = Somewhat Influential
 3 = I = Influential
 4 = VI = Very Influential
 5 = NA = Not Applicable

	<u>NVI</u>	<u>SI</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>VI</u>	<u>NA</u>
1. older brother or sister	1	2	3	4	5
2. tribal leader	1	2	3	4	5
3. family friend	1	2	3	4	5
4. guidance counselor	1	2	3	4	5
5. job training partnership act coordinator (JPTA)	1	2	3	4	5
6. girl or boyfriend	1	2	3	4	5
7. adult professional from community	1	2	3	4	5
8. minister or clergy	1	2	3	4	5
9. father	1	2	3	4	5
10. classmates	1	2	3	4	5
11. mother	1	2	3	4	5
12. teacher	1	2	3	4	5

	<u>NVI</u>	<u>SI</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>VI</u>	<u>NA</u>
13. home school coordinator	1	2	3	4	5
14. principal	1	2	3	4	5
15. relatives (aunts, uncles, grandparents, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5

Part II. Please rate the following events as to the importance of their influence on your career of job choice.

	<u>NVI</u>	<u>SI</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>VI</u>	<u>NA</u>
16. high school career fair	1	2	3	4	5
17. visit from two-year vocational/ technical school recruiter	1	2	3	4	5
18. Visit from four year college	1	2	3	4	5
19. visit from military recruiter	1	2	3	4	5
20. assignment to high school work experience program (JTPA, COOP, etc)	1	2	3	4	5
21. Trip to four year college/university	1	2	3	4	5
22. Trip to 2 year vocational/technical school	1	2	3	4	5
23. factory tour or trip to future job site	1	2	3	4	5

Part III. Please rate other factors which may have influenced your career choice.

	<u>NVI</u>	<u>SI</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>VI</u>	<u>NA</u>
24. Location of job or college near family (desire to stay near family)	1	2	3	4	5
25. Location of job or college away from family (desire to be out on your own)	1	2	3	4	5
26. Television show	1	2	3	4	5
27. Newspaper advertisement	1	2	3	4	5
28. Magazine article	1	2	3	4	5

	<u>NVI</u> 1	<u>SI</u> 2	<u>I</u> 3	<u>VI</u> 4	<u>NA</u> 5
29. Radio advertisement					
30. Mailed recruitment material (letters, brochures, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
31. Potential for high salary	1	2	3	4	5
32. Challenge offered by career choice	1	2	3	4	5
33. Internet Information (World Wide Web)	1	2	3	4	5

Part 1V. Please check the **one** response that applies best to you.

34. What is your ethnic/racial background?

_____ Native American, American Indian or Alaskan Native

_____ Asian, Pacific Islander, Filipino

_____ Black or African American

_____ Hispanic, Chicano, or Spanish American

_____ White, Caucasian

_____ Other, (please specify) tribal enrollment/affiliation_____.

35. Do you live on the reservation? (circle) YES or NO

36. What is your gender? (circle) MALE or FEMALE

37. What is your grade level? (circle) JUNIOR or SENIOR

What are your plans after graduation?

___Decided___Undecided If decided, please choose from below, if undecided,

What career plan are you likely to pursue?

___Two year vocational/technical school ___Military service

___Tribal college ___Four year college/university

___Job ___Other (Please specify)_____.

Thank You and Miigwetch for your participation.